

Fremont Building Official Code Enforcement

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Stairways - Handrails

Consult the building code before proceeding on stairway projects.

New Residential – Class A – required for all new residential construction.

Max Riser 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

Min Tread 10" – (as measured from leading edge to leading edge)

(Recommended new residential 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " max riser and 10" min tread)

Existing Residential – Class B - not accepted for new construction

Max Riser 8"

Min Tread 9" – (as measured from leading edge to leading edge)

All others: - i.e. commercial

Max Rise 7 inches

Min Tread 11 inches – (as measured from leading edge to leading edge)

Nosing of not less than $\frac{3}{4}$ " and not more than 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " are required on solid treads – not required when over 11 inches

Stairs and Ramps shall have handrails on both sides – exception – within the dwelling unit it is permitted to have a handrail on one side only.

Handrails not less than 34" and not more than 38" above the surface of tread as measured vertically from the top of the rail to the leading edge of the tread. Handrail heights between 34 inches and 38 inches.

Ends of handrails are to be returned to the wall or terminated in newel posts.

Hand rails – restricted sizing/shapes – shape and grip size within the limits of a circular cross section of 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches minimum to 2 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches maximum. Standard 2 x 4 lumber does not qualify as handrails.

Guard rail heights = 42 inches for all areas over 30 inches in height - exception - existing guards = 36"- 38". Some manufactured guard systems for residential applications are allowed at 38". (check with the building official).

Balusters are to be 4 inch maximum spacing – measuring the openings up to 34 inches above the tread.

Stairways to be not less than 36 inches in width (and not less than 44 inches width if >50 capacity)

Stairs shall have landings – exception in one-and two-family, a door at the top of an interior flight of stairs is permitted provided it does not open over the stair (i.e. opens in). Max 1.5" for sliding exterior doors and max 8" for swing doors.

Minimum headroom for all parts of the stairway is 6 feet 8 inches

Maximum single stairway access without landings is 12 feet vertical

All interior and exterior stairways need to be provided with a means of lighting, including the landings and treads.

The control for activation of interior stairway lighting shall be accessible at the top and bottom of each stairway without traversing any step. The illumination of exterior stairs shall be controlled from inside the dwelling unit.

Exception - Lights that are continuously illuminated or automatically activated.

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This information was compiled for specific purposes as an advisory check sheet and its use and interpretation otherwise is not intended - Thomas Roy – Building Official/Code Enforcement